United Nations E/2016/SR.12

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
4 April 2016

Original: English

2016 session
24 July 2015-27 July 2016
Operational activities for development segment

Summary record of the 12th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 23 February 2016, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. Palma Cerna (Vice-President) ..... (Honduras)

Contents

Agenda item 7: Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation (*continued*)

(a) Follow-up to policy recommendations of the General Assembly and the Council (*continued*)

Panel discussion: "Organizational arrangements: How to strengthen inter-agency collaboration in organizational presence at country, subregional and regional levels?"

Agenda item 7: Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation (*continued*)

(a) Follow-up to policy recommendations of the General Assembly and the Council (*continued*)

(b) Reports of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office for Project Services, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, and the World Food Programme (*continued*)

(c) South-South cooperation for development

General discussion

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent as soon as possible to the Chief of the Documents Control Unit (srcorrections@un.org).

Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org/).

16-02824 (E)

Please recycle

In the absence of Mr. Oh Joon (Republic of Korea), Mr. Palma Cerna (Honduras), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Agenda item 7: Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation (*continued*) (A/71/63-E/2016/8)

(a) Follow-up to policy recommendations of the General Assembly and the Council (*continued*)

Panel discussion: "Organizational arrangements: How to strengthen inter-agency collaboration in organizational presence at country, subregional and regional levels?"

1. **Ms. Guevara** (Vice-President of the Republic of Honduras), delivering the keynote address, said that if the United Nations did not exist, it would have to be invented. But what it really needed was to be reinvented and reinvigorated. Honduras was host to nine country offices with combined core resources of $9 million; by Latin American standards, its ratio of earmarked resources to core resources was relatively high. Total United Nations operational activities for development amounted to less than 10 per cent of official development assistance.

2. Although it was a lower middle-income country with natural resources, a strategic location in Central America and strong potential for tourism, Honduras faced complex development challenges. More than two thirds of the population lived in poverty and half suffered from extreme poverty. Honduras received only modest official development assistance and had to rely on domestic resource mobilization and international private flows to finance its development. However, Honduras was implementing many important projects with United Nations support. It had recently become one of seven pilot countries participating in the regional programme "Strengthening the Capacity of Select Developing Countries to Mainstream Sustainable Development into National Development Strategies" of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. With regard to development cooperation, quality was as important as quantity. That approach placed her Government in the driving seat and ensured that local priorities were taken into account, the main priority being national capacity-building.

3. Differentiated technical assistance should be of high quality and implemented in an equitable and inclusive manner in support of government efforts to empower excluded and vulnerable groups. Unfortunately, the development work of the United Nations was sometimes fragmented. Unrepresentative governance and unpredictable funding had created challenges for operational effectiveness across the system, and cooperation between organizations had been hindered by competition for funding, mission creep and outdated business practices.

4. Honduras was not a "Delivering as one" country but that should not prevent the United Nations from addressing cross-cutting development challenges in an integrated manner. It was also affected by high levels of crime, violence and narcotics trafficking. Homicide rates had been persistently high but the trend was currently downward. Her country also had to cope with infant and child mortality, vulnerability to global economic shocks and climate change. In particular, El Niño had caused two successive years of drought and threatened the country's food security, with the risk that development gains might be reversed. The bark beetle had caused the loss of 112,000 hectares of pine forests, threatening the health, economy and survival of the country. Furthermore, after dengue fever and the chikungunya virus, Honduras was affected by the Zika virus, which it did not know how to control because of the lack of available scientific studies.

5. One of the great development challenges of the day was how to develop a strategy for what the United Nations should do in middle-income countries, which were home to 70 per cent of the world's poor. While the United Nations focused on its normative role and leveraged other actors, a greater multisectoral capacity to collect data and translate it into normative and policy advice would help to meeting the needs of each middle-income country and ultimately facilitate exchanges of knowledge, South-South and triangular cooperation, and enable middle-income countries to graduate. That did not necessarily mean acceding to high-income status. Honduras had adopted the Multidimensional Poverty Index as a more comprehensive and effective method for measuring unmet basic needs. The Index was unique in that it also took into account sociocultural factors. The most appropriate measure of poverty was one used to evaluate the effectiveness of social policies and focus efforts and resources.

6. The time had come for the United Nations to reflect on how it could be organizationally fit for the next 15 years. Horizontal interconnectedness required interconnected institutions through revitalized organizational and governance arrangements which in turn required political will, funding and leadership. Accordingly, the United Nations development system needed a road map, including a timeline for setting up mechanisms to implement changes and prevent setbacks from turning into obstacles. There was therefore a need for radical reform based on an inspirational vision paired with pragmatic and sequenced steps. The status quo was not an option. The United Nations development system had reached the limits of what it could do to reform itself. Member States should therefore take the lead by making the quadrennial comprehensive policy review a strategic tool to provide direction and a mandate to the United Nations development system. The Economic and Social Council had a critical role to play in shaping the framework in which that system would operate.

7. Confronting the challenges ahead was a social, economic, political and moral imperative. All Member States, and developed countries in particular, should work to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and address the impact of climate change within a framework of common but differentiated responsibilities. With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the entire world had acknowledged that global challenges required a common global effort; they must be tackled multilaterally or they would not be tackled at all. The wisest course was to adapt the United Nations to changed realities so that it could safeguard the future.

8. **Mr. Nabarro** (Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development), moderator, said that the 2030 Agenda was revolutionary and required Governments and people to cooperate in order to implement it. For that purpose, the international system needed to be renewed so that multilateral action would be appropriate for the task ahead. As a middle-income country, Honduras was facing social and climate-related challenges that had undermined recent gains in poverty reduction. It was looking to the United Nations system for support but believed that a different kind of United Nations action was necessary, namely, cross-cutting action in line with the 2030 Agenda with the capacity to react quickly to whatever situations developed, under the leadership of the Government.

9. **Ms. Bárcena** (Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)), panellist, said that the regional dimension should be incorporated into the quadrennial comprehensive policy review report. Achieving the objectives of an equality-centred agenda over the next 15 years would require a change in the style of development along with economic, social and industrial policies, which would need to be aligned with gradual structural changes. Business as usual was no longer an option; the regional commissions were preparing to adapt to that paradigm shift. The regional commissions had been designed over 60 years previously to generate new thinking on policy issues to ensure inclusive development with an integrated approach in which the economic, social and environmental dimensions interacted in their daily work. The regional commissions provided policy advice to Member States on the basis of normative analytical learning stemming from the experience of the countries served in each of the regions. They also worked with Governments on macroeconomics; fiscal policy; finance; and statistics and data collection. Finance ministries were cutting budgets and creative solutions were therefore needed to preserve social policies.

10. There was a need to build a universal, interdependent and integrated agenda involving universal approaches and the provision of services to least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, middle-income countries and small island developing States. In the Caribbean, ECLAC was working on a debt relief initiative to create a resilience fund for investment in adaptation projects. The Caribbean had an external debt of $42 billion because of natural disasters, but only $2 billion of multilateral public debt would be covered by the proposed debt relief, which should be regional and global. The regional commissions were intergovernmental bodies well suited to providing countries with a one-stop shop for policy advice and integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development. A shared vision supported by the Regional Coordination Mechanism established by the Council brought together all the funds, programmes and specialized agencies. The regional level was effective not only in leveraging capacity in support of country demands but also for forging consensus in the regions and making regional voices heard at the global level.

11. The pillars supporting the interdependence of all the dimensions of development were the integration of the Sustainable Development Goals into national development planning and fiscal frameworks; strengthened statistical capabilities for data collection, disaggregation and dissemination in the context of the data revolution; and means of implementation, inter alia through reductions in tax avoidance and illicit flows, and the leveraging of science and technology. Since technology transfers would not happen spontaneously, ECLAC was suggesting the purchase of patents which would then be donated to poor communities.

12. An enhanced regional architecture would involve establishing regional forums for sustainable development bringing together Member States, the United Nations Development Group and non-United Nations organizations. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda was taking place in a very complex economic and political context characterized by a downturn in the world economy, slowing trade, excessive liquidity and a lack of aggregated demand. Financial assets were not going to productive investment and inequality was growing. The richest 1 per cent had more than the rest of the world combined. The wealth of 62 individuals equalled the wealth of the bottom half of humanity. It was therefore time to rethink global governance, which should move towards collective Keynesianism, but it would have to be a global, environmental and sustainable-development Keynesianism. Member States should dwell on those reflections and consider the regional commissions as partners in carrying out creative destruction on the basis of a new coalition between the state, the market and civil society.

13. **Mr. Kelleher** (Senior Adviser, United Nations Relations and Partnerships, World Bank), panellist, said that the World Bank had a long and productive history with the United Nations system; it was part of that system while retaining a separate governance structure. The ambitious 2030 Agenda was a turning point for the development system, as Governments would not be able to accomplish the Sustainable Development Goals alone: country-level support from all partners was necessary to hold Governments accountable for the promises they had made in 2015. The work of individual institutions must be improved while enhancing seamless inter-agency collaboration.

14. The World Bank and the United Nations development system had already collaborated on dozens of initiatives. In 2008 they had signed the United Nations-World Bank Partnership Framework for Crisis and Post-Crisis Situations to help countries, people and institutions prevent and recover from conflict and crisis. The Fragility and Conflict Partnership Trust Fund, a multi-country and multi-donor trust fund, had also been established as a more sustainable international response to fragile and conflict situations. A strong relationship existed between the leaders of both the United Nations and the World Bank, allowing them to undertake joint work in areas affected by armed conflict, including the Sahel, the Great Lakes region, the Horn of Africa and the Middle East, in order to address ongoing economic and security challenges.

15. The two institutions had also cooperated on the joint implementation of global development goals. As work began on the Sustainable Development Goals, they had relied on the experience gained from the Millennium Development Goal (MDGs) Acceleration Framework, which had identified and remedied bottlenecks, promoted accountability and led to improved performance on MDG indicators. In the United Republic of Tanzania, for example, conditional cash transfer programmes had been enhanced by supplementary nutrition interventions and additional resource leveraging by the Tanzania Social Action Fund. By mid-2015, the project had achieved its goal of reaching 1 million households in the country.

16. The World Bank and the United Nations had also worked together to seek support from other partners and sectors, learning from the challenges of meeting the MDG deadline. In that process, the two institutions had discovered that the timeliness and effectiveness of policy instruments were critical for accelerating scale-up. Objective scientific evidence should be translated into local country context. The quality of public expenditure should also be improved, with a focus on high-impact programmes and the broad sharing of upstream technical advice. Synergies should be found to transcend policy and institutional silos.

17. Strong support from local Governments generally led to better progress. The World Bank had developed a strengthened country engagement model that would make joint goal setting more evidence-based and participatory, taking into account local needs. Quality data should be shared with all partners to set benchmarks, evaluate approaches and determine effectiveness. Data was one of the most powerful tools to end extreme poverty and promote accountability but in many low-income countries, data was lacking. The

World Bank had identified 29 countries without poverty data from 2002 to 2011, and another 28 countries that had conducted only one survey collecting poverty data during that same period. Better data was needed to design, implement and review work. The World Bank had recently pledged to establish household-level surveys in 78 of the world's poorest countries at least every three years. New technologies and public-private sector collaboration must be utilized. The cost of data collection was declining and there was growing support for open data, which was more inclusive and participatory for all.

18. The World Bank was an anchor partner of the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data, launched in September 2015. The private sector must play a role in poverty alleviation, especially under Sustainable Development Goal 1. Over the past decade, 90 per cent of the jobs created in developing nations had been created by the private sector. Jobs were the most effective way to help people escape poverty. The private sector was a core partner for sustainable development, not only in terms of job creation, but also in drawing the private capital that was vital for the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals. However, as the private sector was constrained by fragility, conflict, informality, rural poverty and gender issues, such constraints must be tackled through an integrated cross-sectoral approach in accordance with the priorities of the United Nations.

19. The multilateral system that had been patched together over the previous 70 years was now struggling and required more than just a new coat of paint. Challenges like climate change, pandemics, natural disasters, economic instability and conflict were global in nature: rich and poor nations alike must face them. The global system of governance continued to be resilient and adaptive; if cooperation was emphasized, there was a much greater chance of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and helping millions out of poverty.

20. **Mr. Nabarro** (Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development) asked the panellists to expand upon the challenges facing the multilateral system and what changes should be made to country presence in order to garner more effective support for national actions.

21. **Ms. Bekele-Thomas** (Director, Office of the Chef de Cabinet, Executive Office of the Secretary-General), panellist, said that she had witnessed positive trends in the field, especially in terms of meaningfully aligning programmes and core values with national planning and budgeting processes, which was critical when trying to encourage national ownership and leadership. In Kenya, 27 United Nations agencies had worked together with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to help formulate the country's medium-term plan and ensure that it embodied the core values of the United Nations, including humanitarian, human rights and peacebuilding dimensions Additional expertise and capacity-building would be necessary to support the national plan.

22. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for Kenya was specifically drafted to support the country's national development plan and had thus become part and parcel of the Government's programme. If the Government and the country at large believed in the development plan, by definition they also supported the UNDAF.

23. Governments and all entities should have a say in how to reallocate resources that had not been absorbed in implementing the UNDAF. The role of her Office was merely to push from behind and make sure that the correct values were embedded. In Kenya, one national plan and therefore one United Nations plan combined all aspects of development, including human rights, humanitarian issues and peacebuilding. It was necessary to have a common vision using shared data and common analysis and risk assessment. The UNDAF had consequently become a national partnership platform and coordination mechanism.

24. The private sector should be integrated into the process as an economic stakeholder. A population growth of 3.5 per cent per year meant that there would always be growing demand for basic needs such as health and education; consequently, the private sector could play an important role. The UNDAF was a compact that a Government signed with its citizens.

25. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was neither sectoral nor vertical and was embedded in most development plans. Her Office did not seek to reinvent the wheel, but merely to highlight priorities and monitor and evaluate results. It was crucial to disaggregate data at the county level; in a country like Kenya, every county had its own priorities, which should be reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals.

26. Regional bodies, the World Bank and others should work together to address the current challenges regarding data collection, analysis, monitoring and evaluation. Her Office had created a platform of philanthropic organizations and foundations to support the Sustainable Development Goals and help with the data revolution.

27. The mainstreaming of the Sustainable Development Goals was clear at national levels. Once a midterm plan was adopted, it was necessary to build the necessary infrastructure and to start mainstreaming and creating indicators, benchmarks and baselines. Not all indicators would be useful for all countries, or even all the counties within a country.

28. How work was conducted in country offices had changed. For example, when looking at cross-border issues, which were now sources of conflict and extremism, her Office tried to seal those borders with development. Recently, Kenya and Ethiopia had signed an agreement to address the needs of the communities around the Moyale border. Under the auspices of the Horn of Africa Initiative, peace had been restored in the region six months earlier.

29. **Ms. Nasr** (Minister of International Cooperation, Egypt), panellist, said that the 2030 Agenda was both ambitious and timely, especially in the Middle East and North African region; it was crucial, however, that it became a country agenda. Ownership, leadership and commitment at the highest levels were essential for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Extensive consultations should be held with Governments, the private sector, civil society, youth and parliamentarians. Ownership required reaching out to all stakeholders across all regions, especially in view of the vast differences in poverty and development between regions.

30. The 2030 Agenda required integrated solutions, rather than the piecemeal work of United Nations agencies with individual clients on specific topics. For example, gender issues had mainly been addressed by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), despite the fact that there were many other agencies that dealt with sectors where gender was a cross-cutting theme, such as microfinance. Working together meant more than having meetings and joint conferences.

31. Funding practices must favour national priorities. In many cases, they catered instead to donor priorities. Sustainable commitment and ownership would follow only if tasks were demand-driven rather than donor-driven. It was also important to be responsive. As many countries went through policy uncertainties engendered by civil war, climate change, unrest and other risks, the United Nations system must adapt its strategies to changing situations on the ground.

32. It was important for the United Nations to provide capacity-building support to institutions for data collection, the development of policy tools and mechanisms for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The ambitious goals of the 2030 Agenda would require significant capacity-building, especially as many countries did not have institutions robust enough to implement the required changes and reforms. A more hands-on, integrated and cross-cutting approach was needed.

33. The United Nations must reach out more to bilateral and other institutions. The Organization must tap into sources of funding that could be found outside of the United Nations family, such as the African Development Bank. Donors should meet on a monthly basis to ensure complementarity in tasks. Scaling up was also important to ensure positive results in a timely manner. Governments could not deliver the Sustainable Development Goals alone; it was necessary to work closely as development partners with a clear mechanism on how to move forward.

34. **Mr. Nabarro** (Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development) asked what obstacles were currently preventing regional issues from being fixed, and what recommendations could be made in that regard.

35. **Mr. Estreme** (Argentina) said that the regional commissions had an important part to play in regional monitoring and capacity-building within the context of the 2030 Agenda. That regional dimension was not sufficiently reflected in the document submitted for the quadrennial comprehensive policy review. One section did refer to regional mechanisms, but that was not enough. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the experience of monitoring and follow-up for the Millennium Development Goals had been very positive. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean had produced excellent reports during that period.

36. The regional commissions also had a role to play in developing the sources of data needed to implement

the 2030 Agenda. That data should be sustainable over time and comparable between countries. Complementarity of effort between regional mechanisms and the regional offices of funds and programmes would be vital. He asked about cooperation and coordination mechanisms currently operating between the regional commission and other bodies. Regarding the means of implementation, the quadrennial comprehensive policy review was an opportunity to ensure flexibility and differentiation within the framework of a universal agenda.

37. **Mr. Charles** (Trinidad and Tobago), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that the work of the United Nations development system at the regional and subregional levels would be a critical enabling factor supporting action at the national and local levels. For example, the office of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean in Port of Spain had been providing capacity-building and technical assistance in the areas of data and statistics, with the cooperation of Governments and other agencies active in the field of development. There should therefore be more inter-agency coordination while respecting the individual mandate of each entity.

38. There was a role for both Governments and the United Nations system in ensuring that support was coordinated with regional and national priorities. UNDAFs were developed through broad-based consultation with country teams and other actors, including civil society. Unfortunately, in the CARICOM region, such consultation had often been conducted on an ad hoc basis with little opportunity for learning or the institutionalization of best practices. Within the context of implementing the 2030 Agenda, mapping of subregional and regional entities, including organizations outside the United Nations system, should be carried out in order to identify roles and mandates, thereby assisting inter-agency coordination and planning with specific and clear deliverables.

39. Given the unique vulnerabilities of small island developing States, which were compounded by the structural challenges of middle-income country classification, funding and the predictability of funding continued to be a serious challenge. It would be interesting to hear the views of the panel on the use of pooled funding and other best practices as a means of improving inter-agency coordination and delivery, in particular in the context of a possible regional UNDAF system.

40. **Mr. Kolehmainen** (Finland) said that he would welcome more information on lessons learned and success stories in joint programming, including joint planning and joint evaluations. He asked how shared service centres across agencies might enhance cooperation in the context of administrative services and enhance efficiency through joint procurement.

41. **Mr. Eichen** (Germany) said that the need for country-specific and differentiated answers from the United Nations system that reflected individual needs at the country level had implications for its organizational presence. Building on its comparative advantages, the United Nations development system had different roles in middle-income countries and least developed countries, and there were also specific needs in fragile contexts where the silos of peace and security, and humanitarian and development interventions, had to be overcome. He asked what the main organizational characteristics of the United Nations presence in those contexts would be.

42. **Mr. Waheed** (Observer for Maldives), speaking on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), said that the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway (Samoa Pathway) required the United Nations to improve interregional and intraregional cooperation between small island developing States, inter alia in the context of institutional mechanisms and capacity-building. Resident coordinators should share lessons learned and best practices. He wondered how current models of service delivery in small island developing States delivered on that mandate, and what institutional mechanisms had been put in place to improve coordination. Indeed, many small States had experienced uncoordinated efforts by different United Nations entities, such as multiple visits to small island developing States from different organizations. Coordination would lead to better-directed funding and improved coherence in implementation and reporting.

43. Small island developing States provided unique opportunities for service delivery since they were often served through multi-country offices. However, staff in local offices were often unfamiliar with the United Nations system. Capacity-building was therefore needed at the country level. Furthermore, small island developing States were often the testing ground for

multi-country UNDAFs, but programme countries and United Nations system entities perceived them to be less useful than the norm. AOSIS would welcome the panel's perspectives on that model of service delivery.

44. **Mr. Bultrikov** (Kazakhstan) said that the United Nations development system was considered by some experts to be fragmented and lacking in efficiency at a time when the 2030 Agenda made new demands in terms of more coherent, strategically guided international cooperation for sustainable development. Progress in coherence was achieved mainly at the national level, in particular through the introduction of "Delivering as one". While activities at the country level remained the focus of United Nations development activities, the new global challenges specified in the 2030 Agenda — for example, those related to globalization and climate change — required new solutions involving all stakeholders, including the private sector and academia.

45. Kazakhstan had offered to transform its former capital, Almaty, into a regional United Nations hub focusing on sustainable development, humanitarian assistance, disaster risk reduction and resilience-building, thereby enhancing early warning, preparedness and crisis response. Member States should see dialogue in the Council as an opportunity to overcome existing problems and align the United Nations development system with the Sustainable Development Goals. That new paradigm would require enormous resources. Each State should therefore consider allocating 1 per cent of its annual defence budget to a fund for the Sustainable Development Goals. In the long term, the Council should be transformed into a global development council with a membership made up of Member States elected by the General Assembly, and the heads of all specialized agencies, including the Bretton Woods institutions. The Council should act as a global economic regulator, promote economic growth and thereby decrease the risk of global crisis. It would be useful to hear the panel's opinions on reform of the Council.

46. **Ms. Bárcena** (Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)) said that the regional commissions and United Nations development group funds and programmes could work together more effectively. ECLAC had provided UNFPA with a great deal of information on demographic transitions, which would be different in every country in the region. For example, Uruguay was ageing whereas Guatemala had a young population. ECLAC was also disaggregating data by gender and compiling an atlas of gender inequality. If women received the same salaries and had the same job opportunities as men, poverty would be reduced.

47. In the Caribbean, it had been suggested that $2 billion of the $42 billion external debt should be paid to a debt relief mechanism in local currency in order to create a resilience fund to invest in adaptation of tourist infrastructure and coastal areas. Efforts were also being made to establish regional sustainable development forums bringing together other agencies as well as non-United Nations partners.

48. **Mr. Kelleher** (Senior Adviser, United Nations Relations and Partnerships, World Bank) said that institutions in the United Nations family and at the World Bank Group had the advantage of shared values and a shared purpose in the Sustainable Development Goals. Like the United Nations family, the World Bank Group also had a country presence. It could therefore ensure synergies, differentiation and flexibility at the country level, bolstering the trend towards a more collaborative culture.

49. **Ms. Bekele-Thomas** (Director, Office of the Chef de Cabinet, Executive Office of the Secretary-General) said that leadership and political will mattered. The resident coordinator's authority should be enhanced, in particular through increased resources. Joint programming was a cost-effective way of delivering results; a model for that was Kenya, where all United Nations entities worked together and were jointly evaluated in a single process every year. In most cases, however, each agency was asked by its executive board to report independently when a single executive board for all agencies would be far preferable. Lastly, every United Nations country team should be rigorously selected based on the profile of the country in question.

50. **Ms. Nasr** (Minister of International Cooperation, Egypt) said that from the perspective of Egypt and many of the countries where she had worked, there was often a lack of cohesion between United Nations agencies. Capacity-building in local offices would ensure that the resulting synergies helped Governments and other stakeholders to implement the Sustainable Development Goals. Tools, indicators and assessment mechanisms would help identify gaps and challenges,

and enable countries to address them in a timely manner.

51. **Mr. Nabarro** (Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development) said that the 2030 Agenda was completely new and it was vital for all to respect the fact that it was owned by Governments and their people. Governments were having to adapt quickly to new realities, some of them very challenging; high-quality disaggregated data were key to that rapid adaptation. The United Nations system needed to act in a coherent manner at country and regional levels, while adapting its way of working to fit local needs. The private sector, academia and civil society must also be fully engaged as partners in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. He reiterated the need for a strong sense of commitment to the new way of working called for by the Vice-President of Honduras.

Agenda item 7: Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation (*continued*) (A/71/63-E/2016/8)

(a) Follow-up to policy recommendations of the General Assembly and the Council (*continued*)

(b) Reports of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office for Project Services, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and the World Food Programme (*continued*)

(c) South-South cooperation for development

General discussion

52. **Mr. Bamrungphong** (Observer for Thailand), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the global commitments mainstreamed into the operational activities for development of the United Nations development system were not open to reinterpretation and should reflect the highest priority, namely, poverty eradication. The United Nations system should scale up its assistance to developing countries in their collective efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda in a universal and inclusive manner. Operational activities for development should therefore build the capacity of developing countries to address long-term sustainable development at the national level while also taking into account their different levels of social and economic development.

53. The United Nations funds and programmes, in their regular reports to the Council, should provide information on their respective plans, programmes and projects, in accordance with their respective mandates; on their efforts to address the root causes of poverty and hunger, in line with the 2030 Agenda; on the sharing of good practices and lessons learned on the ground; and on mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda into system-wide planning and reporting.

54. With the decline in the total contribution to core resources for operational activities for development, the coherence, effectiveness and efficiency of the United Nations development system should be increased, in particular in mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda and other intergovernmentally agreed development commitments into system-wide planning and reporting, as well as enhancing coordination and coherence at the country level to make effective use of diminishing core resources and the expertise of United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies. The "Delivering as one" approach could enhance the relevance and effectiveness of the United Nations development system, while at the same time strengthening national ownership of operational activities, and achieving results. However, a one-size-fits-all approach would not help United Nations entities to engage with countries at different levels of social and economic development and with varying national priorities and challenges.

55. Given the incremental nature of funding for short-term humanitarian assistance during the protracted period of humanitarian crises around the world in recent years, there should be separate tracks of accountability for the development and humanitarian assistance activities of the United Nations development system in order to ensure that those funds were properly channelled into addressing urgent humanitarian needs and sustainable development issues. Furthermore, core resources must continue to be the bedrock of operational activities for development. It was a matter of concern that the ratio of core resources to earmarked resources continued to decline in the overall funding for operational activities. There was an urgent need to balance core and non-core resources; core resources should not be used to subsidize non-core activities. Full cost recovery, proportionally from core and non-core sources, should be the guiding principle governing the

funding of all non-programme costs. The donor base for core resources should also be expanded.

56. The geographical and gender diversity of the resident coordinator system should be increased. Furthermore, the governing structures of United Nations funds and programmes should be reformed in order to ensure equitable and inclusive participation and maintain the legitimacy of the system as a whole. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation must be strengthened and the recommendations of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation contained in its decision 18/1 must be implemented, including through system-wide provision of financial and human resources for the Office.

57. The deliberations on the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review should give due consideration to ways in which the United Nations development system could provide better focused and better coordinated support to middle-income countries. Similarly, the Council should discuss, inter alia, concrete proposals on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations development system.

58. **Mr. Poorta** (Observer for the Netherlands), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member States, said that the 2016 report of Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (A/71/63-E/2016/8) contained several proposals that could be used as a foundation for reform. The European Union and its member States welcomed the emphasis on the challenges posed to the United Nations development system by the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The integrated and universal nature of the 2030 Agenda required a change of mindset, collaboration across disciplines and overcoming silos. Business as usual was no longer an option; a stronger, better coordinated and more effective development system that was fit for purpose was needed to implement the transformative agenda.

59. Competition between United Nations entities must be avoided, while complementarity and partnership must be incentivized and reinforced. Joint programming must be developed and implemented, along with harmonized reporting and management frameworks. The United Nations development system must promote development effectiveness and focus on the delivery of results. He called for a strengthened coordinating role of the Economic and Social Council as well as the United Nations Development Group in promoting system-wide coherence and enhanced synergies between the normative, standard-setting and operational functions. It was essential to strengthen the link between the development and humanitarian sectors to deliver effectively, especially in conflict-affected and fragile States.

60. The development system must be ready to deliver on gender equality, both as a goal and as a cross-cutting issue. While the European Union welcomed the progress made in mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment, there was still room for improvement, including through continued strengthening of the linkages between normative and operational work on gender equality, the maintenance of a strong focus on increased investments in the gender capacity and expertise of United Nations staff, and equal gender representation across the United Nations system.

61. The European Union noted with satisfaction the positive impact of the "Delivering as one" approach already adopted in 50 countries and welcomed its full implementation at the request of Governments, including implementation of the standard operating procedures. The European Union and its member States supported strengthening the role of the resident coordinator system, namely its authority and legitimacy, and urged all agencies, funds and programmes to sign with the resident coordinator's management and accountability systems and implement its cost-sharing arrangement.

62. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda would present a major challenge for countries that lacked the necessary review and monitoring capacity. The development system must therefore support capacity-building of national systems for development planning, disaggregated data collection and analysis, implementation, reporting, monitoring and evaluation. United Nations agencies, programmes and funds must therefore accelerate their use of national systems as much as possible.

63. The report should have provided a more detailed analysis of the development system's funding architecture. Although funding should flow from agreement on functions, reforms were needed to address the challenge of obtaining the necessary

resources. Further reflection was needed regarding financial flows into the development system, in particular on whether volume and targeting were aligned with strategic plans. The European Union welcomed the 2015 structured dialogues with Member States and believed that they should be organized on a more systematic basis. It also welcomed the strengthened efforts to mobilize resources and aim for transparent, predictable and flexible funding.

64. The potential for the United Nations development system to mobilize resources as a system remained largely unexploited. It would be important to define a clear system-wide role in the post-2015 context, and to increase funding predictability by applying a replenishment consultation process. Currently, the European Union and its member States contributed about 40 per cent of all donations to the United Nations development system; efforts to strengthen funding for the system must therefore include broadening the donor base and using more innovative funding methods such as public-private partnerships, multi-stakeholder partnerships and pooled funding.

65. He expressed the hope that the second phase of the Council's dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations development system would constitute a key input to the discussion on the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review. The quadrennial review was an essential tool for the development system and could also help to define the system's engagement in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

66. **Mr. Momen** (Bangladesh), speaking on behalf of the Group of Least Developed Countries, said that the operational activities segment of the Economic and Social Council was especially important in 2016 because of the adoption of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement; the ongoing dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations development system; and the upcoming negotiations on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review. Until recently, the development system had focused on the MDGs; it must now realign to implement the 2030 Agenda effectively and efficiently. Coordination and harmonization among its three pillars would be crucial in that process.

67. The least developed countries had been the key beneficiaries of United Nations development activities and programmes during the MDG era. Member States agreed that as the most vulnerable group of countries, least developed countries deserved the most attention in any development-oriented activity. All United Nations entities must work in a coordinated manner to implement the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 to ensure coherence and synergy with the 2030 Agenda. The focus on least developed countries must not be diverted by other competing interests. Recent trends showed that resource allocation to those countries had been declining, including core resources. That alarming trend must be immediately reversed. Also, non-core resource funded programmes and projects must not be serviced or managed by core resources.

68. Operational activities for development must establish new sectoral programmes in least developed countries instead of pursuing smaller projects. It was a matter of grave concern that a number of United Nations entities conducted their work based on the concept of low-income and middle-income status, rather than on least developed status. The least developed countries were an acknowledged group with regularly updated definitions. Without specific programmes targeted to those countries, and the collection, collation and presentation of data according to the least developed classification, it would not be possible to effectively address the challenges faced by least developed countries.

69. It was also important to ensure that United Nations development activities in the least developed countries were predictable and incremental in nature. Governments must be informed of changes or discontinuation of planned development activities well in advance, in order to prevent any negative impacts on national development efforts. In addition, all least developed countries must have the country-level presence of United Nations agencies to help with development needs. The Group of Least Developed Countries recognized the positive impact of the "Delivering as one" approach; however, different country perspectives and national priorities must be respected.

70. All United Nations system organizations, in their reports to their governing bodies, must provide details on their operational activities, best practices and lessons learned, as well as specific recommendations on overcoming the challenges faced by the least developed countries in their specific areas of work. It

was crucial to know how individual least developed countries were faring in their efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

71. The Group of Least Developed Countries would support efforts to adopt a quadrennial review that reflected the views, visions and instructions of the Member States to the entities of the United Nations with a view to implementing the 2030 Agenda. It also called upon Member States to support the least developed countries in their efforts to graduate in a sustainable manner, with demand-driven assistance provided by the United Nations development system, and to ensure that United Nations support to graduating and recently graduated countries was not subject to abrupt reductions. In conclusion, he requested the Secretary-General to reflect the recommendations of the Group of Least Developed Countries in his revised report on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review.

72. **Mr. Sareer** (Observer for Maldives), speaking on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), said that the commitments made in the 2030 Agenda, the Sendai Framework, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and other instruments were not up for reinterpretation; instead, it was necessary to identify and correct existing systematic challenges that hindered development and implementation, while strengthening the practices that had worked. The 2030 Agenda and the Samoa Pathway must be integrated into all aspects and activities of the United Nations development system. The multidimensional nature and holistic paradigm of the 2030 Agenda required a clear understanding of how the sustainable and environmental aspects of development and poverty alleviation would translate into operational realities moving forward. Environmental targets must be practically applied to actions in order to prevent unintended consequences.

73. AOSIS was concerned at the massive imbalance between core and non-core resources. The functions of the development system should be aided by, rather than dictated by, its funding practices. It was necessary to move beyond business as usual, shifting away from earmarked non-core funding to core funding that could be aligned with national priorities and thus address development realities on the ground.

74. For small island developing States, it was critical to build and strengthen local capacity for implementation with coordinated and tangible support from the United Nations system. While many United Nations entities had expressed commitment to improving data collection and analysis, such aid could quickly become confusing if it reached national Governments from multiple sources. It was therefore critical to break down silos and ensure that all funds and programmes worked to deliver as one.

75. The diversity of the resident coordinator system must be improved to better represent local communities and increase participation as well as opportunities for bottom-up knowledge-sharing and action. The Alliance of Small Island States saw many areas for improvement in the service delivery of the resident coordinator and the UNDAF process, especially with regard to coordination in remote small island developing States.

76. Accountability was needed throughout the United Nations system not only to provide transparency to the global community, but also to make more effective decisions in the future. AOSIS looked forward to the development of evidence-based policies.

77. In order to support country-level service delivery, the United Nations should focus on its specific value added in the area of coordination and communication. Incentives should be developed to encourage inter-agency collaboration.

78. Time and time again, the importance of differentiated and targeted assistance to countries in special situations, including small island developing States, had been stressed. Small island developing States should have had an opportunity to contribute their unique perspective during discussions on the United Nations development system; their concerns and their representation should be taken into account in preparing the programmes of future meetings.

79. **Mr. Grant** (Observer for Canada), speaking also on behalf of Australia, said that it was important to seize the historical opportunity of the 2030 Agenda and concretize a vision for a transformed United Nations development system. Business as usual was not an option: the development system must be reshaped to ensure that it was fit for the multiple purposes laid out in the 2030 Agenda, as well as for the differentiated needs of countries in special and fragile situations. The system should balance coherence and specificity, while becoming less fragmented and avoiding both overlap and competition.

80. Structural and financing reforms were needed to maintain the relevance and efficiency of the United Nations development system, which otherwise ran the risk of further marginalization. First, shared development results must be delivered through multisector and multi-stakeholder financing and delivery mechanisms. Second, greater cooperation and collaboration in planning, financing, operations and reporting must be established. Third, the humanitarian, peace and development pillars must be more integrated.

81. Great progress had been achieved in implementing the mandates of the 2012 quadrennial comprehensive policy review. However, the development system still faced challenges with regard to developing national capacities, regional integration and gender equality. While the UNDAF process and its associated tools had generated significant efficacy gains, much more was needed to demonstrate efficiencies and address leadership, monitoring, and reporting gaps in implementing system-wide issues. Other shortcomings were linked to unrealistic, overly numerous and sometimes unclear mandates in the current quadrennial review. Canada and Australia hoped that the new quadrennial review could address those failings, reflecting on the key breakthroughs of the 2030 Agenda, including more sophisticated approaches to unlocking transformative partnerships and financing flows, targeted efforts towards gender equality and the empowerment of women, girls and the most vulnerable.

82. Moving forward, Canada and Australia would emphasize the streamlining of system-wide mandates with clearer purposes; better integration of peace, humanitarian and development activities, taking on board the relevant recommendations from various reports; elaboration of an incentive-based funding system at the country level towards joint funding and programming in support of the Sustainable Development Goals; rationalization of the field presence of United Nations entities at country and regional levels; institutionalization of results-based management; rethinking the resident coordinator system with a view to ensuring that coordinators had adequate leadership, delegated authority, robust accountability mechanisms and adequate resources; and ensuring that civil society and the private sector were considered core partners in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

83. Underpinning all of those elements was the need for a new governance architecture for the development system at both country and global levels. A more strategic quadrennial review that provided a system-wide framework to plan, budget, implement, monitor, evaluate and report to Member States would be vital to repositioning the United Nations development system in the context of the 2030 Agenda. Canada and Australia also believed that a more authoritative and accountable United Nations Development Group, as well as an updated financing framework with incentives for collaboration and pooled funding, were necessary.

84. The core functions to be performed by the development system must be clearly defined and adapted to different country contexts. Universality, integration and the aim of leaving no one behind all required major reforms of the development system. There was no room for United Nations competition; the system must deliver at scale.

85. **Ms. Haynes** (Trinidad and Tobago), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that the 2030 Agenda was more dynamic and integrated, as well as broader in scope, scale and coverage than the MDGs. Consequently, the United Nations development system must continue to improve its flexibility, coherence and effectiveness at all levels. Efforts to ensure that the system was fit for purpose must be scaled up and expanded, including in the spheres of development, humanitarian affairs and peace and security. Such measures must be implemented in a time-bound and coordinated manner that built on existing arrangements.

86. CARICOM welcomed country-level progress in improving coordination and coherence of the United Nations development system, including through the use of UNDAFs. It also welcomed the consolidation of business processes, common measurement tools, pooled funding and coordinated budgeting strategies. Nonetheless, there was a critical need to further coordinate the system for enhanced and harmonized service delivery, especially in crisis and high-risk situations.

87. In addition to the challenges outlined by AOSIS in terms of the participation of remote small island developing States in multi-country programmes, there was a remarkable lack of coordination in development activities at the regional and subregional levels that must be addressed in order to ensure appropriate regional follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda. A number of agency best practices as developed in the

context of the MDGs could be scaled up and replicated in a system-wide manner.

88. CARICOM was concerned about the continued increase in non-core resources for development activities, coupled with a continued decrease in core resources. The implementation of a more complex development agenda would require greater flexibility in the allocation of resources according to regional and national priorities. Core resources allowed for the most flexible, effective and impartial allocation of resources across the development system. Although CARICOM supported the call for earmarked contributions to be more predictable, long-term and in line with the 2030 Agenda, it also stressed that such efforts were not a substitute for a critical increase in core resources.

89. Developing countries, especially those within the CARICOM subregion, required focused and expanded institutional and capacity-building in order to effectively implement the 2030 Agenda. Capacity-building in data collection and statistical analysis must be complemented by improvements in policy design and management in order to effectively mainstream the global development framework into national policies and strategies. CARICOM therefore called for the acceleration of efforts aimed at ensuring that UNDAFs and other planning instruments focused on capacity development.

90. **Ms. Persson** (Sweden) said that throughout 2015, multilateralism had proven its pertinence in the face of severe and complex global challenges. At a point when many might have questioned the viability of the United Nations, the international community had exceeded expectations and concluded four major agreements in one year. The United Nations development system was uniquely positioned to support Member States in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Her delegation expressed unwavering support for the multilateral system and the work being done in the Economic and Social Council.

91. The United Nations had a unique normative, leveraging and convening role that should be safeguarded and improved, adapting as necessary to the rapidly changing development landscape. It was important to build consensus on what functions the development system should perform. Particular emphasis must be placed on the role of the United Nations in least developed countries and in countries affected by conflict or other humanitarian crises. In such contexts, success depended on enabling collaboration between the peacebuilding, humanitarian, and development pillars. In the post-2015 world, the ability of the United Nations to generate, promote and foster partnerships must be further strengthened. The United Nations must also strengthen its capacity to deliver integrated and coordinated policy support. In response to the universal 2030 Agenda, the United Nations must meet the highest standards to remain viable and relevant to all countries, including middle- and high-income countries. It also played an indispensable role in monitoring and reporting.

92. Her delegation looked forward to hearing from other Member States, and especially developing countries, concerning the functions that the United Nations development system should perform. Once consensus was reached on that issue, it would be easier to discuss organizational reform, funding and governance.

93. Her delegation attached particular importance to funding. In light of the increased expectations of the 2030 Agenda, it was more important than ever to provide the funds and programmes of the United Nations with more predictable and high-quality non-earmarked funding. Donors must acknowledge the importance of providing core support, which formed the bedrock of multilateral funding, while the development system must incentivize core resource provision. Her delegation would continue to support the United Nations funds, programmes and agencies with high levels of core funding and keep encouraging good multilateral donorship. As the 2030 Agenda was universally applicable, it was necessary to broaden the base of development funding. Funding practices must be aligned with the functions of the United Nations development system, acknowledging that different functions would require different funding modalities.

94. None of the aforementioned reforms could be accomplished in a day or two, but thanks to the important international agreements concluded in 2015, there was growing cross-regional recognition among Member States that business as usual would not suffice and that more reforms were needed to accommodate the changing development landscape. Multilateralism would remain pertinent for a long time to come.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.

United Nations E/2016/SR.13

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
7 April 2016

Original: English

2016 session
24 July 2015-27 July 2016
Operational activities for development segment

Summary record of the 13th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 24 February 2016, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Palma Cerna (Vice-President) ..... (Honduras)

Contents

Agenda item 7: Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation (*continued*)

(a) **Follow-up to policy recommendations of the General Assembly and the Council (*continued*)**

Panel discussion: "Partnership approaches: How to ensure accountability, coherence and evaluation of impact?"

Agenda item 7: Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation (*continued*)

(a) **Follow-up to policy recommendations of the General Assembly and the Council (*continued*)**

(b) **Reports of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office for Project Services, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, and the World Food Programme (*continued*)**

(c) **South-South cooperation for development (*continued*)**

General discussion

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent as soon as possible to the Chief of the Documents Control Unit (srcorrections@un.org).

Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org/).

16-02941 (E)

Please recycle

In the absence of Mr. Oh Joon (Republic of Korea), Mr. Palma Cerna (Honduras), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 7: Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation (*continued*)

(a) Follow-up to policy recommendations of the General Assembly and the Council (*continued*) (A/71/63-E/2016/8)

Panel discussion: "Partnership approaches: How to ensure accountability, coherence and evaluation of impact?"

1. **Mr. Dossal** (Founder and Chairman, Global Partnerships Forum), moderator, said that the efforts of Governments, the private sector and foundations should be pooled, while ensuring transparency and accountability, in order to raise the funding to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. He invited the panellists to share their views on how accountability and partnerships would be the drivers of the Sustainable Development Goals process. He also invited them to consider how the impact of the outcomes could be measured and evaluated.

2. **Mr. Mayaki** (Chief Executive Officer, New Partnership for Africa's Development, African Union), panellist, said that, from 1960 to 2000, policies in Africa had been nationally driven and donor-oriented without sufficient planning capacities. Since the creation of the African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in 2001, the regional dimension had been enhanced by a growing number of partnerships, more common positions had been defined within the African context and foreign direct investment had increased considerably. Through the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), planning capacities and processes had been reignited at the national level.

3. As for current emerging trends, with the significant reduction in official development assistance, improved management of public finances and the mobilization of domestic resources were now given high priority. In the development landscape, reliance on donors had shifted towards greater mobilization of domestic resources and engagement with the private sector. For example, most of the current energy, transport and information and communication technology infrastructure in Africa was fundamentally based on public-private partnership.

4. Africa was also trying to define more common positions, such as the Agenda 2063, which focused on industrialization. Prioritizing industrialization was the best way to create jobs for youth, which was the primary concern of policymakers in Africa, since youth constituted the highest proportion of the population. NEPAD was focusing on industrialization in the partnerships it was developing.

5. The next 10 years would witness increased regionalism and localism, which would affect the role of the State. There was a push for policies to be designed from both the top down and bottom up, with greater participation of civil society and the private sector.

6. The Sustainable Energy for All initiative, designed within the United Nations context, was a good example of a successful partnership, because it had provided an opportunity for alignment and coherence. The Sustainable Energy for All hub located at the African Development Bank offered a platform for integrated multidimensional planning and coordination between the African Development Bank, NEPAD, the African Union Commission and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). It also served as an inclusive convening power by including country focal points, civil society, the private sector, bilateral and multilateral partners, the United Nations system and the founding members. Sustainable Energy for All and its African hub had thus developed concrete and actionable tools that should be exploited for the realization of the 2030 Agenda.

7. Africa had also engaged in a series of multilateral cooperation platforms known as strategic partnerships with Africa. In that context, and through its pan-African institutions, it was maintaining robust relationships with India, the Republic of Korea, China, South America, Turkey, the League of Arab States and the European Union. It also valued multilateral initiatives such as the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD). TICAD 5 had provided a window for the participation of the private sector, which had allowed key agriculture and infrastructure initiatives to be implemented.

8. The factors that contributed to an initiative's success included learning by doing; inclusive

involvement of representative multi-stakeholders at the early stage of the definition process; free local domestication of the initiative at the national, regional and continental levels; global consensus and recognition of the importance of the initiative; and coherence and alignment of initiative objectives and tools. Partnerships should be genuine, balanced and aligned with existing plans and priorities. The United Nations development system had a leading role to play in safeguarding those elements of success.

9. **Mr. Dossal** (Founder and Chairman, Global Partnerships Forum) asked panellists to share their views on the best way was to engage with NEPAD to support programmes in Africa.

10. **Mr. Mayaki** (Chief Executive Officer, New Partnership for Africa's Development, African Union) said that NEPAD had established the Grow Africa platform in partnership with the World Economic Forum, which had sought to engage with NEPAD with regard to agricultural productivity and attracting multinationals specialized in agriculture. Grow Africa had created space for interaction among the international private sector, the African private sector and the African Governments. It also involved the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). It was a learning-by-doing process that had led to institutional innovations based on concrete needs at the national and regional levels.

11. **Mr. Dossal** (Founder and Chairman, Global Partnerships Forum) said that the development challenges ahead required innovative financing. The Islamic Development Bank had a number of programmes to support economic and social development in its member States. He invited Mr. Aqa, Vice-President for Cooperation and Capacity Development, Islamic Development Bank, to share his thoughts on partnerships, accountability and uniformity of standards.

12. **Mr. Aqa** (Vice-President for Cooperation and Capacity Development, Islamic Development Bank), panellist, said that no institution could address the increasingly complex development challenges alone, which was why the concept of cooperation was enshrined in the Articles of Agreement of the Islamic Development Bank. The Islamic Development Bank Group, which was the development organ of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, consisted of the Bank itself, the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation, the Islamic Corporation for the Development of the Private Sector, the Islamic Corporation for Insurance of Investment and Export Credit and the Islamic Research and Training Institute and was therefore able to address development issues comprehensively and innovatively.

13. The Islamic Development Bank had historic cooperation partnerships with other international institutions, for example the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC), the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, the United Nations system, the European Union, the World Bank and other multilateral development banks. It had recently intensified its discussions and engagement in those forums to enhance the effectiveness of development cooperation. Its recent discussions with the European Union, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) had led to practical actions in cooperation and partnership.

14. Within the Islamic Development Bank Group, there were many innovative ways of doing business that could add significant additional resources to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and improve efficiency and effectiveness. Over the previous three years, the Is Islamic Development Bank net approvals had averaged US$ 10 billion annually Another funding package would go towards facilitating trade transactions and export credit insurance. The Group also mobilized additional resources, both domestically and internationally,, for example through the *sukuk* (Islamic bonds) programmes for development, most recently in Benin. Other institutions did not explore the idea of bonds and endowments for development, despite the fact that those instruments could transform the way in which poverty reduction, unemployment and other issues were addressed.

15. According to its projections, in the next 15 years, the Bank would be investing around US$ 150 billion into the targets related to the Sustainable Development Goals and, more importantly, would be partnering with other institutions. It had recently launched, together with the United Nations and the World Bank Group, an innovative financing initiative in the Middle East and North Africa Region (MENA), which required the private sector to invest in development and stability. In partnership with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, it had launched a grant facility to address poverty, health

issues, agricultural-related employment, food security and rural infrastructure in the poorest countries. The grant would be provided to countries that could not afford concessional loans to enable them to qualify for loans. While 30 per cent of the facility would be the grant itself, the remainder would be used to unlock concessional loans from the Bank.

16. Although grant resources should continue to be provided, they were not of a sufficient scale to make the significant change that was required for development and poverty reduction. Therefore, the Triple-Win mechanism — whereby grant resources were blended with the loan power of banks and domestic policymakers took responsibility and ownership — would be the way forward in addressing the challenges identified by the Sustainable Development Goals.

17. The main principle guiding the Islamic financial instruments was that they were linked to real economic activity and productivity, making them much more immune to shocks and turbulences. The other guiding principle was financial inclusion, which brought together individuals, wealthy people, the private sector, development communities and Governments to build solid partnerships for development. For example, in Turkey, the Bank had recently been financing a private sector health-care initiative, which was guaranteed by the Turkish Government.

18. Fragility was one of the key challenges that needed to be addressed, not only in terms of conflicts, but also the fragility of markets, institutions and the economy. The Islamic Development Bank could not act as a humanitarian, development or peacekeeping institution, which was why it concentrated on investing in prevention. Since, according to various reports, 31 out of the 33 conflict-affected countries were members of the Islamic Development Bank, the Bank was very concerned about the fact that there would still be 500 million people living under the $1.25-per-day poverty line in conflict-affected countries after 2030.

19. The key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, ensuring sustainability and preventing economic shocks was significant investment in youth. More innovative approaches to employment creation and development infrastructure were needed, because the future generation would not seek employment alone, but also an engaging environment for entrepreneurial activities.

20. **Mr. Dossal** (Founder and Chairman, Global Partnerships Forum) said that, after hearing from Ms. Kingo, Executive Director, United Nations Global Compact, the panel should examine how there could be better inter-agency coordination and what the United Nations system could do to lead that effort.

21. **Ms. Kingo** (Executive Director, United Nations Global Compact), panellist, said that in order to achieve the 2030 Agenda, the number, scale and impact of partnerships needed to be increased. Integrity should be the utmost priority in all partnership efforts. The United Nations had made great strides in partnerships in recent years and could learn from those experiences to fast-track future success.

22. The United Nations Global Compact was the United Nations focal point for business. It drove the global responsibility business movement based on 10 universally recognized principles in the areas of human rights, labour rights, environment and anti-corruption. Every year, the 8,000 companies participating in the Global Compact must submit a Communication on Progress, which was a public disclosure of progress in implementing the 10 principles and thus a crucial accountability mechanism. Failure to submit a Communication on Progress could result in expulsion. During its 15 years of existence, the Global Compact had expelled 6,000 companies. The Global Compact also produced the largest annual corporate survey examining how companies incorporated sustainability practices into their strategies and operations. The Global Compact intended to leverage the Communication on Progress and the annual survey to better understand how business contributed to the Sustainable Development Goals and identify new opportunities to drive markets and advance the global goals. Taken together, the Communication on Progress and the annual survey provided models for monitoring and accountability that other United Nations initiatives might wish to consider when designing measures to track partnership progress in the post-2015 era.

23. What happened at the local level would be crucial to the success of the 2030 Agenda; the Global Compact was therefore concerned with turning global goals into local business. In the previous week, it had announced a new Local Sustainable Development Goals Pioneers campaign, looking to identify the best business leaders from big and small companies and change-makers in every region in the world who were already demonstrating how business could be a force for good

and contribute to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The second phase of the campaign, to be launched in June 2016 at the Global Compact Leaders Summit, would assist local networks in developing country-level strategies and activities to prioritize the Sustainable Development Goals and in convening multi-stakeholder dialogues that inspired new partnerships and contributed to national development plans. The Global Compact was using its online resources to complement those local efforts. The United Nations business action hub, business.un.org, was a system-wide platform that brought business and the United Nations together to share partnership and project opportunities, especially at the local level.

24. In January 2016, the Global Compact had chaired a meeting of chief executive officers (CEOs) and United Nations principals in Davos to discuss public-private partnerships and the Sustainable Development Goals. The CEOs had recommended that the United Nations should: break down silos and cooperate across issues and goals; engage business partners more strategically, (as too often, it was felt that businesses were seen simply as a funding resource, despite the fact that businesses wanted to offer the United Nations skills, knowledge and technical expertise); assume greater risks, streamline bureaucracy and speak the language of business; support bold new ventures and learn from partnership successes and failures; build and strengthen local coalitions for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals; and treat companies with the best records and highest ethical standards as preferred United Nations partners. Companies that committed to supporting United Nations values and principles through the Global Compact and reported publicly on their commitment on an annual basis had the potential to be better long-term partners for the United Nations system.

25. The Global Compact played a coordinating, capacity-building and knowledge-sharing role to help the United Nations build coherence, impact and integrity in all business partnerships. Before building new or additional United Nations business partnership guidelines, it must be ensured that the existing framework was soundly implemented using common approaches. The Guidelines on a Principle-based Approach to Cooperation between the United Nations and the Business Sector, issued by the Secretary-General in August 2015, offered a critical common framework for upholding the integrity and independence of the Organization in all partnership activities with the private sector. The Guidelines required United Nations entities to disclose all of their business partnership activities, which had also been requested by Member States in General Assembly resolution 70/224 entitled "Towards global partnerships: a principle-based approach to enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and all relevant partners". Without comprehensive disclosure of all partnerships, it would be hard to measure results and strengthen impact over time.

26. As the Guidelines noted, United Nations entities should make their partnership information easily available on their own websites. Business.un.org could serve as a one-stop shop for anyone looking for a full overview of United Nations partnership activity. Great gains could also be made by working together on due diligence. Although the United Nations system already shared partnership risk, it should share partnership risk management as well. By sharing information on the screening of partners, United Nations agencies could ensure that the right partners were chosen across the board.

27. **Mr. Dossal** (Founder and Chairman, Global Partnerships Forum) said that he hoped that business.un.org could serve as a convenient location to showcase success stories and lessons learned and provide a platform for new partnership opportunities.

28. Turning to the lead discussant, Mr. Gass, he asked him to share his vision of what the United Nations must do to implement the Sustainable Development Goals and how the private sector and civil society could help in that endeavour.

29. **Mr. Gass** (Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, Department of Economic and Social Affairs), discussant, noted that, in addition to the business.un.org database, there was the sustainabledevelopment.un.org platform where 1,942 partnerships had registered.

30. A big change marked by the 2030 Agenda was the shift from donor accountability towards recipients to the accountability of the State towards its people. The responsibility for implementation was brought down to the national level, while maintaining the importance of solidarity between countries. He asked whether the new partnerships were strengthening the relationship between the State and the people or connecting and

binding recipients to donors, in which case, it must be determined whether they were still fit for purpose.

31. Given that the second paradigm shift was the commitment to leave no one behind, he asked whether the new generation of partnerships was taking strategic action by identifying the most vulnerable, understanding what risks they faced and prioritizing reaching the furthest behind first, thus creating a bridge between peacebuilding and development.

32. He also wondered whether the values that were espoused by the partnerships were really communicated and conveyed to all partners and whether those values were really part of the DNA of all partners.

33. Given that the 2030 Agenda was very much about levelling the playing field and reducing inequalities, he asked whether the risks were being shared fairly in the partnerships that were being built. Sometimes donors tended to hand the risk down to the partners.

34. Finally, he asked what it meant to be a United Nations partnership and whether a United Nations partnership was different from any other partnership. What were the United Nations partnerships going to contribute to the 2030 Agenda? Did those partnerships have to conform to certain values? Did those values have to be coherent with the decisions of an intergovernmental body? What were the implications in terms of the accountability of those partnerships?

35. **Mr. Dossal** (Founder and Chairman, Global Partnerships Forum) asked the panellists to explain how they envisaged that value creation through collective efforts and to address some of the questions raised by Mr. Gass.

36. **Mr. Aqa** (Vice-President for Cooperation and Capacity Development, Islamic Development Bank) said that by focusing on the root causes of the problems at hand, the interests of the Governments (those in power), the private sector (which was after legitimate profit) and the people (who wanted a decent standard of living), could be brought together. With regard to the situation of youth, decades-old institutions and systems had been threatened in the blink of an eye with massive population movements, a sign of risk and fragility. In such cases, everyone was in it together. In terms of practical risk-sharing, responsibilities and accountability, the example he had cited earlier — whereby grant resources were provided, the Governments took out loans and the private sector invested — brought everyone closer together. Such models were comprehensive, put Governments in the driving seat and allowed the people to see how they were being served and by whom, which brought stability and reinforced the so-called social contract between the people and their Governments.

37. **Mr. Mayaki** (Chief Executive Officer, New Partnership for Africa's Development, African Union) said that, as the main observer and actor at the national level, the United Nations had gained very high credibility in the development landscape. The capacity of States to respond to challenges could not keep pace with the thinking of the private sector and civil society. The United Nations could help to fill that gap, which would allow for better policy design at the national level.

38. **Ms. Kingo** (Executive Director, United Nations Global Compact) said that partnerships were often spoken of as though they were some kind of mysterious thing, even though a partnership was simply different organizations working together to solve a problem in a way that added value for all. Businesses had been working together in partnerships for years, without necessarily emphasizing that or calling them partnerships.

39. In order to implement the 2030 Agenda, there had to be partnerships, cooperation and problem-solving between business and the United Nations. There needed to be a shift from entrepreneurship and experimenting with partnerships to a mainstream phase where United Nations entities partnered with business to create results that added value for all partners. For an organization of high integrity like the United Nations, it was important to choose the right companies to partner with — those that had the same set of values and world view — in order to avoid exposure to reputational risk. All businesses that partnered with United Nations entities could be asked to comply with the 10 business principles of the Global Compact, so as to ensure that a minimum standard was observed. Best practices could be identified across United Nations agencies for monitoring the progress of partnerships and their integrity, and for evaluating the companies.

40. **Ms. von Steiger Weber** (Switzerland) said that it was important to look at what differentiated United Nations partnerships from other partnerships, because

that difference brought added value and would be vital to implementing the 2030 Agenda. United Nations operations were essentially risk business, because development was risk. It was therefore important to develop a culture of learning, namely learning from failures. The United Nations could allocate more resources building a culture of risk management, using the 2030 Agenda as a starting point. As the universal repository of the norms to which all Member States had signed up, the United Nations must continue to ensure due diligence, accountability and transparency when engaging in partnerships. The United Nations operational system needed to be less bureaucratic in order to effectively fill the gap between Governments and civil society and the private sector. The Global Compact should encourage its participants to emphasize sustainable development, and it should also reach out to investors.

41. She asked what the United Nations needed to do in order to bring the Islamic Development Bank and Global Compact partners on board to make a difference in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

42. **Ms. Naeem** (Observer for Maldives), speaking on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States, said that the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals would require the ownership of actors at all levels. Development cooperation matchmaking and partnership forums were quickly catching up to traditional aid practices. It must now be determined how to ensure follow-up to those partnerships and how to manage the ever increasing number of partnerships.

43. The purpose of the Small Island Developing States Partnership Framework, established under the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway (Samoa Pathway), was to follow up the over 300 partnerships — a large number of which were between Member States and United Nations agencies and the United Nations development system — that had been announced at the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States in Samoa. The Private Sector Partnerships Forum, held in Samoa, had its own follow-up mechanism and a second follow-up session had been held.

44. There was an urgent need to establish common reporting templates in order to determine whether those partnerships were working and what challenges existed on the ground. To enable partnerships to report easily, a standardized uniform reporting template was currently being developed, which would allow comparisons to be made across a uniform platform and reveal the common challenges, trends and best practices.

45. **Mr. Dossal** (Founder and Chairman, Global Partnerships Forum) said that Member States must be willing to accept some risk when engaging in partnerships. The establishment of common reporting and common norms and standards, which could be led by the Economic and Social Council, could enable partnerships to flourish.

46. Although the Global Compact had over 12,000 signatories, those companies did not enter into partnerships through the Global Compact. The business.un.org website had not even been populated by the United Nations system, whereas the Sustainable Development Goals website had. Those two initiatives were therefore residing separately in the United Nations system. The United Nations needed to take leadership in that regard.

47. He asked the panellists to explain what they would do to support intergovernmental collaboration and to contribute to the establishment of norms and standards.

48. **Ms. Kingo** (Executive Director, United Nations Global Compact) said that the Global Compact regularly consulted the business.un.org website to gain insights from some of the encouraging partnerships that already existed between the United Nations and businesses. One possible foundation on which to begin to build a learning culture in the area of partnership was the UN-Business Focal Point group, which had been discussing minimum standards and common processes across the United Nations. The United Nations system needed to prepare for the risks that would come with an increased number of partnerships and exercise due diligence. Minimum standards, learning and reporting should be established across the system to achieve operational excellence in business partnerships.

49. **Mr. Dossal** (Founder and Chairman, Global Partnerships Forum), noting the strategic partnership that Mr. Mayaki had formed with the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, asked how similar initiatives could be created by the United Nations. He agreed that the United Nations could provide credibility and leadership and asked how norms and standards could be set by the United Nations for multi-stakeholder partnerships.

50. **Mr. Mayaki** (Chief Executive Officer, New Partnership for Africa's Development, African Union) said that, on the Grow Africa platform, the African Union and FAO were attempting to ensure that private investors would apply the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems within the letters of intent regarding agriculture production. In 2015, the African Union, in cooperation with the Global Compact, had presented 16 regional infrastructure projects, which had been given priority within the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa. Through such cooperation, the African Union had been able to design a continental business network that would be informed of those regional infrastructure projects. It had also been able to tackle the crucial issue of early-stage project preparation by exploring potential ways to fill the gap in capacity. The main issue with infrastructure development was not the lack of financial resources, but the lack of well-designed infrastructure projects.

51. **Mr. Aqa** (Vice-President for Cooperation and Capacity Development, Islamic Development Bank) said that competition for resources should be discouraged. Governments needed to be put in charge of local institutions and their capacity should be developed rather than replaced, especially in post-conflict and post-disaster areas, but also across the development spectrum in general. The focus should be on the results and impact of programmes, rather than their volume and size.

Agenda item 7: Operational activities of the United Nations for international development and cooperation (*continued*)

(a) Follow-up to policy recommendations of the General Assembly and the Council (*continued*) (A/71/63–E/2016/8)

(b) Reports of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme/ United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office for Project Services, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, and the World Food Programme (*continued*) (E/2015/34/Rev.1, E/2015/35, E/2016/4, E/2016/14 and E/2016/36)

(c) South-South cooperation for development (*continued*)

General discussion

52. **Ms. Kasese-Bota** (Observer for Zambia), speaking on behalf of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, said that the United Nations system needed to increase capacity support at the national level in order to support the implementation by landlocked developing countries of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024. The Vienna Programme of Action stressed the need for partnerships in the implementation of its six priorities.

53. Landlocked developing countries required partnerships and development cooperation, including South-South cooperation, as well as financial and technical assistance, in order to achieve sustainable development. He called for the establishment of a secure, reliable and efficient transit system to help those countries significantly reduce trade costs and increase their competitiveness on the international trade markets. It would also be vital to build upon their productive capacities to enable them to diversify their production, foster structural transformation in order to reverse their declining productivity in industry and agriculture, and strengthen their resilience to climate change and other economic, social and environmental shocks. Private sector development and entrepreneurship should be encouraged.

54. Landlocked developing countries must be provided with the means to implement sustainable development, including increased official development assistance, increased aid for trade and increased support for follow-up and monitoring. Increased foreign direct investment was also needed towards sectors with a strong potential to stimulate economic growth, development and poverty reduction through employment, the transfer of financial resources, technology and innovations, improved management techniques, infrastructure development and increased productivity.

55. **Mr. Favre** (Switzerland) said that the survey of programme countries had shown that the "Delivering as one" approach had improved the strategic positioning and relevance of the United Nations at the country level. The consistent implementation of that approach, which included an adequately funded resident coordinator system and the full application of the standard operating procedures, should be complemented by measures at headquarters level to

prevent entity-specific decisions that interfered with "Delivering as one" at the country level.

56. A strong, independent, neutral and accountable coordination entity was needed to fulfil the system-wide mandate of the 2030 Agenda. Such an entity would be accountable to all members of the United Nations development system, thus strengthening the system's horizontal governance. In order to avoid any conflict of interest, it would have no implementation functions. It should be able to manage funds for system-wide actions to strengthen collaboration among the United Nations agencies.

57. A United Nations system-wide strategy for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda would be an important step that would build upon the comparative advantages of the United Nations, which lay in its normative, capacity-building and convening role. The strategy would clarify the roles, responsibilities and areas of work of each relevant United Nations entity in each type of context, especially in the least developed, middle-income and conflict- or disaster-affected countries, and thereby minimize overlaps, gaps and duplication. The Secretary-General could be mandated to develop such a strategy through the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination, based on the strategic guidance offered by the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review. The Economic and Social Council could be responsible for monitoring the strategy across the system.

58. There was potential for strengthened local accountability and oversight of United Nations activities. A local board could be introduced in order to strengthen ownership by the receiving Government and the main development actors in the country, including civil society organizations and the private sector.

59. **Ms. Fofana** (Burkina Faso) said that, in spite of significant progress, including the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and the Paris Agreement, a number of challenges remained. Transforming the world would require changes in behaviour, governance, cooperation and management at the international, regional, national and local levels.

60. In order to implement the new development programme, the United Nations development system should be equipped with an integrated coordination model that would enhance collaboration and cooperation among its various bodies, enabling them to work in perfect synergy and more effectively on the ground. Partnerships with States in the financing of activities and statistical data exchange should be strengthened in order to improve policy formation and decision-making. Programmes should be adapted to the needs of each country or group of countries and focus on eradicating poverty, addressing humanitarian crises, peacebuilding and combating insecurity. Reforms should also be aimed at increasing the effectiveness of capacity-building activities for sustainable development through the promotion of North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation and human resources development. Burkina Faso was studying the proposals put forward in the dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations development system on providing assistance to countries in developing national frameworks for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

61. While States were primarily responsible for their own development, the United Nations development system had an important role to play alongside them. Burkina Faso therefore called for a system that was more aware of the realities faced by people and could be adapted to their specific needs.

62. **Ms. Derderian** (United States of America) said that the United Nations development system needed to be fundamentally reshaped and reformed to deliver on a universal agenda that was being implemented during an era of declining core funding. Ways of eliminating the divisions between humanitarian assistance and development programmes should be addressed. Mandates and structures should be examined to determine what the most efficient and effective United Nations development system would look like.

63. The 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review should be a strategic, high-level document that articulated what Member States expected from the United Nations development system and sketched the outline of a flexible structure that could help achieve that goal. Space should be left for the details of other processes, such as the high-level political forum on sustainable development and each agency's strategic plan to be negotiated in 2017. There needed to be better operational outcomes, better coordination, less overlap and competition, and increased coherence at the country level.

64. The quadrennial comprehensive policy review had grown into an intensely detailed document that dictated operational and budget matters to a level that

the United States found inappropriate given the scale and complexity of the various agency operations. The agencies should not be so micromanaged or overloaded with reporting requirements that they were unable to deliver any development assistance. The 2016 review would ideally be relatively short; it should point out a clear strategic direction and then leave the agencies to work out the operational details in the process of determining how best to implement the 2030 Agenda.

65. **Ms. Pham** Kim Anh (Viet Nam) said that poverty eradication must be the overarching goal in the work of the United Nations development system. Development of national capacities was crucial to eradicate poverty and respond to development challenges in least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and middle-income countries.

66. The imbalance between core and non-core funding for United Nations operational activities for development posed many challenges to the operation of the United Nations development system, especially at the country level. Viet Nam called on donor countries to honour their commitment to provide financing to the United Nations development system, especially core funding. More must be done to expedite the implementation of critical mass and adequate cost recovery in order to facilitate the operation of United Nations entities.

67. The strategic plans of United Nations funds and programmes should be aligned with national strategies and priorities, which would help to leverage national capacity in the implementation process and mobilize and optimize resources.

68. Her delegation hoped to see further progress in strengthening United Nations system-wide coherence, including the acceleration of standard operating procedures and the establishment of more common services and joint business units. Strong Government ownership was critical to that process. Surveys from "Delivering as one" pilot and self-starter countries reflected enhanced coherence, relevance and efficiency of the United Nations development system in those countries. The "Green One UN House" in Viet Nam had helped reduce transaction costs and enhance collaboration. Her delegation therefore encouraged the development system to learn from what had worked, while reiterating that a one-size-fits-all approach should not be taken. The implementation of "Delivering as one" and other modalities must suit the specific characteristics and requirements of each particular country.

69. **Mr. Mendoza-García** (Observer for Costa Rica) said that, in order to adapt to the new realities, the United Nations system should be guided by the principle of efficiency, which should include a better system of accountability and greater transparency. Only when the system could demonstrate its efficiency would countries be encouraged to free up more resources. Rather than spreading itself too thin, the system must be focused, coordinated and optimized. Collective actions and common responses should be in the best interests of both the system and Member States. Decisions should be aligned, always recognizing the links among the economic, social and environmental dimensions, which was a complex task that required a break from organizational silos and traditional mentalities. In that connection, her delegation fully endorsed the principles of universality, comprehensiveness and leaving no one behind.

70. The United Nations development system must be able to provide collective responses to all the countries and people in need of them. Such responses should recognize the multidimensional nature of poverty in order to overcome it and the multidimensionality of sustainable development in order to implement it. The system could not continue to build its work strategies on the basis of a per capita income indicator. An information revolution should be initiated to produce segregated, evidence-based information, which would help form adequate responses to current demands.

71. Costa Rica supported the calls for greater predictability of funding and the creation of incentives for traditional and non-traditional donors. Disarmament would be one of the best and most intelligent forms of innovative financing; it would free up substantial resources for the advancement of all people. His country could not understand how a world that was supposed to become more sustainable could have room for a perverse arms trade that perpetuated dependency and violence.

72. Costa Rica did not support a model that encouraged competition between the United Nations agencies; instead, it advocated a model that provided guidance, was flexible, encouraged cooperation and promoted the integration and active participation of various agencies in each one of the Sustainable

Development Goals and targets. The question was whether it would be necessary to modify the mandates of specialized agencies, programmes and funds to achieve that objective. How could a universal agenda possibly be implemented if it was built on a silo-based organizational structure? How could a system that encouraged competition between agencies and programmes possibly foster collaboration and innovation?

73. South-South and triangular cooperation could continue to make a valuable contribution as a complement to other cooperation models, but considerable resources would be required to make such cooperation more efficient and more global. Multilateral and multiparty funds could be viable options in that regard. Such cooperation would also encourage the creation and exchange of capacities and knowledge, particularly among middle-income countries.

74. New work models should be promoted among groups of countries that did not have specific strategies, such as middle-income countries. The United Nations development system did not have an integrated strategy for such countries, despite the fact that many reports had stressed the need for one. Although cooperation efforts had been undertaken in those countries, nothing was known of their impact and any follow-up to them, which once again called into question the efficiency of the system.

75. Progressing towards the attainment of sustainable development for all vulnerable persons, regardless of where they were located, should be in the interest of the Organization in order not only to address the needs of the large number of pockets of global poverty that were found in those countries, as well as countries that had recently entered and were about to enter the category of least developed countries, but also to contribute to building the institutional expertise that was needed in the next stage of development.

76. **Mr. Estreme** (Argentina) said that over the previous decade, many delegations had expressed concern about the stagnation of funding for the essential functions of the United Nations system from core resources, as compared to the exponential growth of non-core funding. The fact that funding of development activities from non-core resources had increased from 50 per cent in 1998 to 76 per cent in 2014 presented the system with a major challenge. Given the restricted and unpredictable nature of non-core funding, there were clear advantages to funding United Nations activities through the core budget, including the possibility of aligning the system with the priorities of Member States and with the principles of national ownership and neutrality.

77. Unfortunately, the repeated calls to address the imbalance between core and non-core resources had not had the desired effect. In that regard, oversight and accountability systems must be improved in order to build greater trust among donor countries. While emphasizing the importance of results-based management and accountability, Argentina urged delegations not to ignore the danger of donor countries being guided by a desire to raise their political profile and achieve results in the short term when making their financing decisions.

78. The composition and functioning of the governing bodies of funds and programmes should be reviewed. The question of achieving fair representation in the agencies of the system should be addressed from both a gender and a geographical perspective. The current imbalance in the membership of the executive boards of the funds and programmes meant that developing countries had little say in decision-making on matters that affected them directly. The development system needed to be flexible. It must be able to adapt to the different needs of countries. and provide support to least developed countries, small island developing States, landlocked developing States, middle-income countries and, given the universal nature of the 2030 Agenda, developed countries as well.

79. As noted in the report of the Secretary-General on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (A/71/63-E/2016/8), the fact that the United Nations development system remained the preferred partner of States was significant. Reinventing the wheel, and structural reform for the sake of reform should therefore be avoided. Quadrennial comprehensive policy review negotiations should be ambitious yet realistic and over the lifetime of the 2030 agenda, continually seek to improve the development system.

80. **Ms. Fladby** (Observer for Norway) said that successful implementation of the "Delivering as one" modality depended on strong national ownership. The tracking of the implementation of the core elements of the standard operating procedures showed that there

was room for further progress; Norway urged all country teams, in close consultation with their host Governments, to make active use of that guidance.

81. Norway welcomed the emphasis on "Operating as one". It noted with appreciation the substantial cost avoidance and the quality improvements documented in the midterm evaluation of the pilot phase of the Business Operations Strategy of the United Nations Development Group. It hoped to see more country teams agree on a business operations strategy and encouraged the High-level Committee on Management and the United Nations Development Group to continue their cost-saving endeavours.

82. Norway had hoped for even greater progress in the area of gender equality and women's empowerment. The percentages of entities with a gender strategy and of entities meeting the requirements of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women remained low. It was disappointing that none of the United Nations entities met the allocation commitment in the Secretary-General's seven-point action plan on gender-responsive peacebuilding.

83. The next quadrennial comprehensive policy review should be more strategic, and the resolution should define what the United Nations development system should do, not only how it was expected to work. The system needed to be able to meet rapidly evolving challenges and respond to the diverse and changing needs of partner countries. Differentiated models of engagement adapted to country contexts were required.

84. The United Nations development system needed to continue its broad-based engagement in the least developed countries and make stronger efforts in politically fragile countries, building on the instruments developed and experience gained in strategic collaboration across the pillars of development, peace and security, and human rights.

85. Norway was concerned about the discrepancy between what was expected from the United Nations development system and the way it was funded. It would welcome further exploration of models based on the idea that funding must follow function.

86. Member States and the United Nations development system needed to place the resident coordinator system high on the agenda. Availability of proper resources was one of several issues in that regard. A first step would be for the Fifth Committee to agree to cover the Secretariat's part of the United Nations Development Group cost-sharing arrangement for the resident coordinator system.

87. **Ms. Navarro** (Panama) said that the operational activities for development of the United Nations system should be handled with flexibility, taking into account the development needs of each country, and be implemented at the request of countries, in accordance with their own development strategies and priorities. Actions to be taken henceforth should support the management, implementation and execution of programmes and projects for Member States that were aimed at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and consolidating human development in countries. The "Delivering as one" initiative should be firmly centred on achieving results, strengthening accountability and conducting joint assessments.

88. One of the main functions of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review was to ensure that the United Nations system could rely on adequate means to contribute to the achievement of the goals of the 2030 Agenda. The effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and impact of the support provided by the United Nations to developing countries should be evaluated in terms of its ability to help those countries meet their sustainable development needs.

89. With regard to financing, the agencies must consistently address the imbalance between core and non-core resources and urge the United Nations development system to ensure that non-core resources fully complied with national needs and priorities and with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). Donor countries must also demonstrate solidarity with and respect for the priorities of recipient countries.

90. Developed countries and international bodies must keep in mind the particular needs of middle-income countries and engage in more and better international cooperation with them, because those countries were home to a large portion of the world population living in extreme poverty and continued to face significant development challenges. To address development challenges, the operational activities of the United Nations development system must promote different cooperation schemes, especially South-South and triangular cooperation, guided by the principles of

solidarity and mutual benefit and aligned with the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda. South-South cooperation must remain a complement to, not a substitute for, traditional North-South cooperation. The strategies defined for middle-income countries should be flexible, differentiated and effective and that suited their own national characteristics and priorities. The focus should be on strengthening capacity in matters related to public policy, knowledge-sharing and best practices.

91. **Mr. Mamabolo** (South Africa) said that the United Nations development system should operate within the confines of national policies and programmes in programme countries to ensure shared delivery of results at the country level. The next quadrennial comprehensive policy review should redouble efforts in its traditional mandate, which was to define the way the United Nations development system operated to support programme countries in their development efforts. Resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system emphasized that poverty eradication should be assigned the highest priority and be considered the underlying objective of the United Nations development system, an aspect to which South Africa and other developing countries attached tremendous importance. A strengthened quadrennial comprehensive policy review, which was aligned with, and responded to, internationally agreed development goals, must meet the expectations of all States, particularly developing countries.

92. There needed to be a significant increase in core resources in order to ensure that the work of the United Nations in programme countries had a tangible impact. The imbalance between core and non-core resources and the fragmentation it caused were of grave concern. A coordinated and coherent United Nations development system could not be achieved without adequate, predictable and stable funding for operational activities. South Africa was disappointed by the apparent inability of the executive boards of funds and programmes to address the quality and quantity of funding of operational activities for development. National capacity-building should be promoted in developing countries, thereby allowing them to address national priorities and achieve internationally agreed development goals.

93. The United Nations development system needed to review the composition and functioning of the governing structures of the United Nations funds and programmes. South Africa advocated early reform of those structures in order for the system to adapt to current realities. The system needed to improve its inter-agency coordination mechanism with regard to forging strategic cooperation among different parts of the system in programming and operations in countries in complex development situations. Interventions should be made upon the request of Governments to ensure mandates were aligned and complied with national development priorities and policies.

94. South Africa was concerned about the decline of official development assistance, particularly to the least developed countries, and the negative financial impact that had on many developing countries. Traditional North-South cooperation where developed countries played a pivotal role was of paramount importance. South-South cooperation, triangular cooperation and private sector funding must be complements to, not substitutes for, North-South cooperation.

95. **Mr. Alhakim** (Iraq) said that his Government believed in the strong correlation between the increased effectiveness and coherence of the United Nations development system and practical outcomes to assist developing countries in eradicating poverty and achieving sustained economic growth and sustainable development. Operational activities for development must tackle the protracted challenges facing sustainable development by building national capacities in developing countries and least developed countries and empowering them to address their national priorities to achieve the internationally agreed upon development goals. Combating poverty in all its forms and manifestations was the most urgent goal; without poverty eradication, there would never be real, tangible sustainable development in the economic, social or environmental dimensions.

96. The operational activities of the United Nations development system should be comprehensive, voluntary, neutral, multilateral and capable of responding to the needs of programme countries. They should benefit the programme countries based on their requests and in line with their policies and development priorities and thus become an effective tool to assist developing counties and least developed countries in achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda.

97. Creating a broad-based partnership through the promotion of the role of the private sector and civil society would contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. A structure could be established under the United Nations that would manage the different economic crises and risks and make the necessary recommendations to assist Member States in overcoming the different difficulties and challenges they were facing in their endeavours to achieve economic stability. A global programme or framework could be established that identified more clearly the commitments of the developed countries, which should be compelled to implement the agreement made in Addis Ababa to finance development in developing economies, particularly in light of the increasing global financial crises which had led to a fall in the growth rates in those countries.

98. Programmes that did not match the economic, social and political specificities of each country would not be effective. The United Nations development system should focus on establishing different frameworks to encourage the different dimensions and pillars of governance to support the implementation and assessment of development policies and strategies. There should also be different mechanisms to define the social responsibility of the major actors in society and establish a social values system. Work should be undertaken to establish and strengthen the different governance frameworks at the local and national levels.

99. Capacity-building should be based on countries' specific training needs to allow their different strategies and plans to be implemented at the central and local levels and empower human resources. The effectiveness of training provided by United Nations entities must be assessed to evaluate its impact on productivity and professional and institutional performance.

100. **Mr. Kononuchenko** (Russian Federation) said that the proposal to expand the traditional scope of development work should be approached with caution, particularly with regard to the possibility of joining development work with humanitarian work. It would be dangerous to attempt to shift the responsibility for crises, especially protracted ones, to the development system and to include development issues in the political agenda, because the non-politicized nature of development work had always been its distinguishing feature and great strength. Joint efforts should be focused on improving existing coordination mechanisms for responding to emergency situations, including under the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

101. The policy for operational activities for development should continue to be based on the principle of national leadership in determining strategies for attaining sustainable development. The United Nations development system should assist and support the relevant work of Member States, rather than mould it to comply with its own policies. Reform should be aimed at improving the alignment of the work of the funds and programmes and ensuring the effective use of donations. Aspects of the "Delivering as one" initiative that had not been effective should be discussed in more detail in order to determine whether it was practical to push for a universal transition to "Delivering as one". To guarantee the effectiveness of the work of the United Nations development system, there needed to be sufficient, flexible and stable financing that was aimed at the rational use of donor resources and that took into account the national interests of programme countries.

102. The Russian Federation supported the endeavour of the United Nations to develop partnerships with civil society and businesses in the interests of implementing the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. When forming partnerships, the focus must be on the principles of doing business that had been developed and tested in the context of the United Nations Global Compact in order to avoid the possibility of unscrupulous partners undermining the authority of the United Nations.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.